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TAGS: [MNUC](#) [NATO](#) [PARM](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: RFG FOR NATO REVIEW OF THE LONGER-TERM ANALYSIS OF
BALLISTIC MISSILE RISKS AND THREATS

Classified By: Classified by Charge Richard Olson for reasons 1.4 (b and d)

11. (U) This is a request for guidance by COB Tuesday, September 11.

12. (S) Summary: NATO's Senior Political-Military Group on Proliferation (SGP) failed to come to agreement on the text for NATO's Review of the Longer-Term Analysis of Ballistic Missile Risks and Threats at the September 5 Plenary meeting.

Following the meeting, the Czech Ambassador conveyed to Charge concerns that the current version of the text downplays the Iranian intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) threat and could make it difficult to justify U.S. and NATO missile defense plans for Europe. USNATO is also concerned that the text in question does not highlight nor adequately reflect the U.S. inter-agency's position of the threat from Iran. End Summary.

13. (S) Background: As requested by the North Atlantic Council on October 25, 2006, NATO's Senior Political-Military Group on Proliferation (SGP) is nearing completion of an in-depth review of the Longer-Term Analysis of Ballistic Missile Risks and Threats which, once completed, will provide the Alliance, s agreed and authoritative reference document on ballistic missile risks and threats. The report will thus serve as the threat justification for any NATO missile defense plans. On September 6, Czech Permanent Representative Fule told Charge Olson that the current text under discussion in the SGP downplayed the ICBM threat from Iran, and would make it more difficult for the Czech government to win public and parliamentary support for the U.S. missile defense site in the Czech Republic. Fule specifically referred to the last sentence of paragraph 13 in Section 2 of the document (below) which states that Iran would face major technical obstacles to producing a deployable ICBM even with foreign assistance.

14. (U) Begin Text of paragraph 13 in Section 2 of the Review of the Longer-Term Analysis of Ballistic Missile Risks and Threats.

(S) Iran has a programme to develop space launch vehicles (SLVs) which would be capable of very small payloads. In order to be successful in such a programme Iran must establish mastery of adapted guidance rules and optimized architecture, something it has yet to achieve. The SLV development effort could allow the covert development of longer-range BMs and may also help to establish part of the technical base from which Iran could develop experimental long range ballistic missiles and potentially later IRBMs/ICBMs capable of delivering warheads to NATO countries.

Based on past precedent (e.g. North Korea and TAEPO DONG) Iran may initially test such a missile as an SLV and not as a BM in order to demonstrate an inherent IRBM/ICBM capability without risking the potential political and economic costs of a long-range missile test. In the absence of supply of a complete ICBM, and its failure to master multiple stage technology, Iran, even with foreign assistance, would still face major technical obstacles, before it could achieve a deployable ICBM. End Text.

¶5. (S) The U.S. has briefed NATO Allies that Iran could have with continued foreign assistance, an ICBM capability by ¶2015. Accepting the above language would not be consistent with previous statements the U.S. has made regarding the Iranian missile threat and could throw Allied support for U.S. and NATO missile defense into doubt.

¶6. (S) The NATO International Staff has called for a meeting of the SGP at the point-of-contact (POC) level for Wednesday, September 12 in order to review the entire document. USNATO requests guidance on paragraph 13 to ensure it accurately reflects U.S. assessments of the potential for development of an Iranian ICBM capable of striking NATO countries.
OLSON